

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 and 12-15 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the features of claim 11, claim 11 is correspondingly canceled, and claim 12 is amended to change its dependency from canceled claim 11 to pending claim 1. Thus, no new matter is added by this amendment.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration since the amendments merely incorporate the subject matter of a dependent claim into an independent claim; (c) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 4-10 are allowed and that claims 11-15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants herein amend claim 1 to include the subject matter of claim 11. Thus, as acknowledged in the Office Action, claim 1, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are allowable.

II. Claim Rejections

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,154,647 ("Ishitani"). Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ishitani. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ishitani and U.S. Patent No. 5,734,124 ("Yasukuni"). These rejections are moot in view of the above amendment.

Withdrawal of the rejections is thus respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-10 and 12-15 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Linda M. Saltiel
Registration No. 51,122

JAO:LMS/jam

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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